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U.S. Farm Security Administration

Farm family labor camp program in Texas

[Washington]

[1941]

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

JUN 16 1944 PCR

FARM FAMILY LABOR CAMP PROGRAM IN TEXAS

WHAT.—The camps are intended to provide facilities for sanitation, health, and community life for farm families who must follow seasonal crop work to make a living. They are shelters but not housing.

WHERE.—There are nine standard camps in Texas. The camps are located where work for many migrants lasts several months. The location of each camp is shown on the map inside.

A TYPICAL CAMP.—Each standard camp contains wood or metal shelters, tent platforms or trailer lots for about 100 to 300 families. At most camps there are also 25 to 50 labor cottages for rent to families with semipermanent work.

A large, central utility building contains shower baths, toilets, laundry tubs, hot and cold water, ironing and sewing rooms.

Social and recreational center is the community building with reading rooms, classrooms, and auditorium. Held here are community gatherings, such as church meetings, kindergarten, homemaking and other practical classes, and similar activities desired by residents.

A full-time, registered nurse is in charge of a completely-equipped camp clinic.

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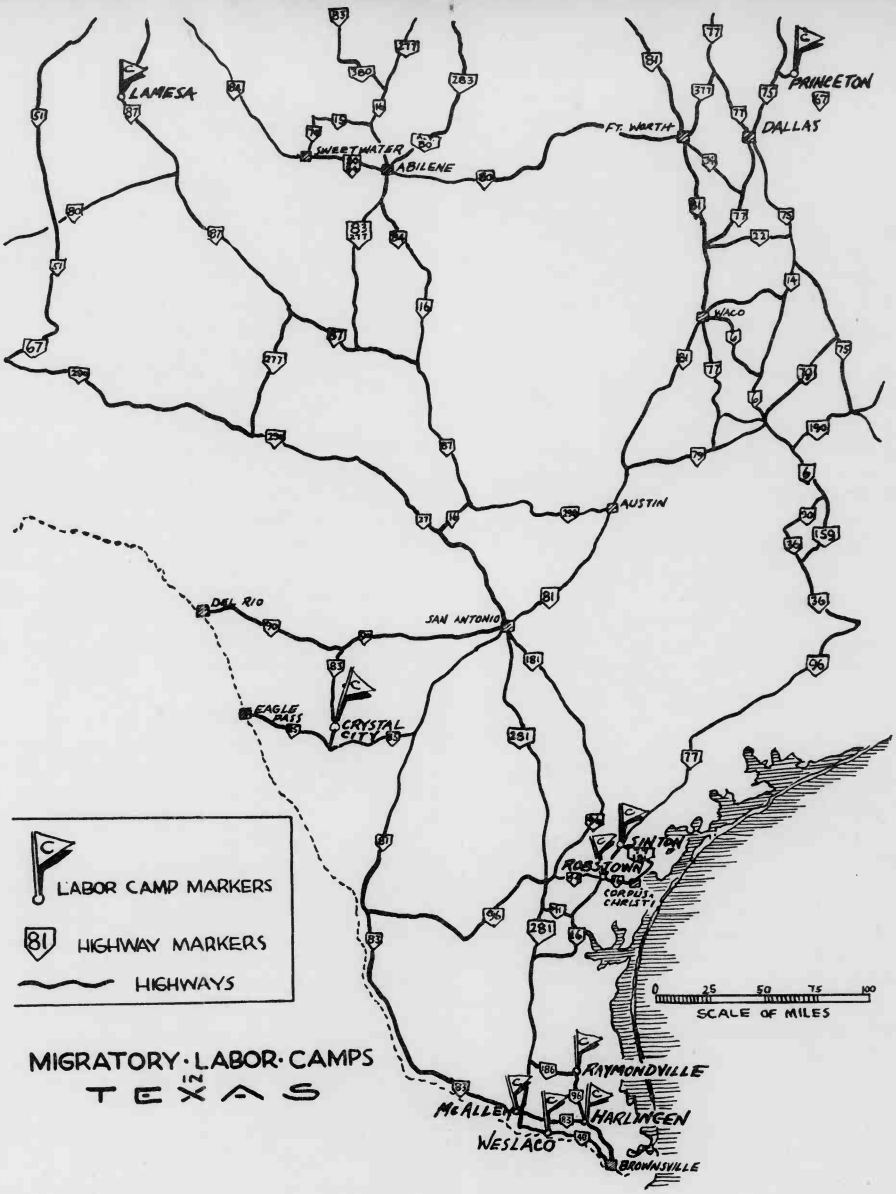

MIGRATORY · LABOR · CAMPS IN TEXAS

Since most migrant families barely earn a living, no rent is charged for shelters. Each family contributes maintenance work around the camp.

MEDICAL CARE.—The Texas Farm Laborers' Health Association provides medical care at the camp clinic, where local doctors serve a few hours daily and are on call. When necessary, hospitalization is given, or specialists called. The clinic nurse cares for minor ills, encourages preventive health care, and conducts child welfare and prenatal clinics.

CAMP MANAGEMENT.—A community manager and small staffs are in charge of camp property, operations, applications, and assignment of quarters. A home supervisor helps women preserve foods with camp equipment; teaches clothing repair and buying economy.

CAMP GOVERNMENT.—Self-government is maintained through a council elected by camp residents. The council stimulates community activities such as singing clubs, athletic events, study meetings, and welfare work; enforces camp rules; and cooperates with health and other civil authorities.

Each family contributes to a camp fund administered by the council. This money buys food and clothing for destitute families, hot school lunches, or equipment shared by all residents. Families not able to contribute donate extra hours of camp work.

A "Good Neighbors' Committee," appointed by the council, shows new arrivals how best to use the camp and how to adjust themselves to the new community.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE.—Employable members of camp families register with the Texas State Employment Service, which surveys local labor conditions and directs workers to jobs. All contacts between employers and workers are made through this agency.

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